

Review of **Vigorous Virtues** – by Joseph Holland

Review by Paul de Vries, pauldevries.com, PhD, President, New York Divinity School

Vigorous Virtues is one of the best, most interesting, and wisest books I have ever examined. In brief one-page thoughtful summaries for every day of the year, author Joseph Holland introduces readers to 365 transformative leaders in the history of the United States. For each one he concisely describes their historical context and influence. He focuses our attention on a profound, practical, deep insight or personal gem of wisdom that helped equip and empower each leader to make the United States a better place for all of us.

Gratefully, Mr. Holland draws his 365 exemplary men and women hero-leaders from a very broad range of ethnic backgrounds, professions, educational achievements, economic levels, and historic contexts. So much is shared on each page – including the well-crafted historic background along with a brief outline of major challenges the person faced. Mr. Holland articulates the core values of each hero-leader, explaining why those values worked to help these overcomers to achieve what was needed for them and for others. With great skill, Mr. Holland also crafts memorable summaries of these potent, winning values. On every page you can feel the *joy* of each special hero's success. And every page creates a *fun* discovery moment for readers.

Before my exploring *Vigorous Virtues*, if you had asked me how many American heroes I could name and along with the lessons that they exemplify, I might have produced 2-3 dozen for you. Now I recommend *Vigorous Virtues*, the best treasury of virtuous heroes. In our era of ignorant cheap shots at American history, here is a wonderful, timely antidote!

Vigorous Virtues is intensely well designed, profoundly readable, enjoyably written, with truly commendable purposes, all the while revealing hundreds of demonstrably worthy achievements by a diverse host of American heroes.

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